

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

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USLO PEKING IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW IMMEDIATE
CINCUNC SEOUL KS IMMEDIATE
CINCPAC IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY TAIPEI IMMEDIATE

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

EO 11652: N/A
TAGS: MARR, MOPS, KS, KN, US
SUBJECT: FRIDAY ROK MEDIA REACTION TO DMZ INCIDENT

REF: (A) STATE 206131 (DTG 190517Z AUG 76), (B) SEOUL 6453
(DTG 191018Z AUG 76)

BEGIN SUMMARY: DMZ MURDRS OF AUGUST 18 CONTINUED TO DOMINATE
ALL ROK MEDIA ON AUGUST 20. NEWSPAPERS ESPECIALLY
CARRIED ARTICLES, COMMENTARIES, AND EDITORIALS

WHICH VIRTUALLY FILLED ALL OF FRONT PAGES AND MUCH OF
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SEVERAL INSIDE PAGES. THEMES EXPRESSED INCLUDED OUTRAGE

AND CONCERN OVER IMPLICATIONS OF INCIDENT AND SPECULATION ABOUT MOTIVATIONS BEHIND IT AND APPROPRIATE REACTION TO IT. END SUMMARY.

1. MORNING NEWSPAPERS GAVE HEADLINE COVERAGE TO SPECIAL STATEMENT READ AT 7 PM ON AUGUST 19 BY KIM SONG-JIN, MINISTER OF CULTURE AND INFORMATION, IDENTIFIED AS SPOKESMAN FOR GOVERNMENT. STATEMENT NOTED THAT KIM IL-SONG, BY ORDERING ALL OF NORTH KOREA'S (NK) REGULAR AND RESERVE FORCES INTO FULL COMBAT READINESS, "HAD PUBLICLY REVEALED HIS SCHEME TO ATTACK ROK BY ARMED FORCE AND DESTROY PEACE IN ASIA."

2. AFTERNOON PAPERS HEADLINED PRESIDENT PAK'S SPEECH TO GRADUATES OF THIRD OFFICERS' SCHOOL. SPEECH REPORTED SEPTTEL.

3. NEWSPAPERS ALL DAY ALMOST UNIFORMLY DEVOTED MOST OF FRONT PAGE AND SEVERAL OF INSIDE PAGES TO INCIDENT AND ITS RAMIFICATIONS. MORNING STORIES MENTIONED UNC IDENTIFIED TWO US OFFICERS KILLED BY NK AS CAPT. ARTHUR G. BONIFAS AND LT. MARK BARRETT, THAT AP DISPATCH FROM WASHINGTON SAID USFK HAS BEEN PLACED ON A PRECAUTIONARY ALERT, AND THAT UNC SENT A PROTEST VERBALLY TO NK COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF KIM IL-SUNG AT THE 379TH PANMUNJOM MAC MEETING THURSDAY, DEMANDING GUARANTEE OF NO FURTHER INCIDENTS. CHOSUN ILBO FRONTPAGE PANMUNJOM CORRESPONDENT DISPATCH THAT GEN. STILWELL HAD A BRIEF TALK WITH UNCMAC SENIOR MEMBER REAR ADM. FRUDDEN AT ADVANCE CAMP NEAR PANMUNJOM THURSDAY. IN LENGTHY INSIDE PAGE ARTICLE, HANKOOK ILBO REPORTER AN TAEK SOO COMMENTED, "NK HAS PRODUCED ANOTHER DRAMATIC INCIDENT IN ORDER TO DECEIVE ITS PEOPLE INTO THINKING THAT WAR IS AT HAND IN KOREA....IT WAS PROBABLY NECESSARY FOR NK TO FIND A NEW BREAKTHROUGH TO GET RID OF THE POLITICAL, ECONOMIC, SOCIAL, AND DIPLOMATIC DIFFICULTIES FACING THEM THIS YEAR...." IN HIS CONTRIBUTION TO HANKOOK ILBO, PROF. LEE KI TAEK OF YONSEI UNIVERSITY TERMED THE DMZ INCIDENT A "NON-MILITARY CONFLICT". "NK EFFORTS TO GET NAC SUPPORT AT COLOMBO MEETING FOR CLAIM THAT SHE IS SOLE LEGITIMATE GOVT. IN KOREA HAVE FAILED....NK ALSO FAILED TO GET MIG-23S FROM USSR...NK SHOULD KNOW THAT US LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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CONCEPT OF KOREA HAS BEEN GREATLY CHANGED SINCE INDOCHINA DEBACLE...NK APPARENTLY AIMED AT GENERATING US PUBLIC OPINION TO OPPOSE US PRESENCE IN KOREA, BUT IT WILL BE THE OTHER WAY...NK'S BRUTAL ACT THIS TIME HAS PROVEN THAT SHE CAN NEVER GET EQUAL TREATMENT FROM AMERICA WITH ROK, EVEN IF CARTER BECOMES PRESIDENT..."

4. AFTERNOON PAPERS ALL CARRIED STORIES OF DEPLOYMENT TO

KOREA OF TWO SQUADRONS OF F-4 FIGHTER-BOMBERS FROM OKINAWA AND ONE SQUADRON OF F-111 FIGHTER BOMBERS FROM MAINLAND U.S. IN ORDER TO PREPARE FOR A POSSIBLE ALL-OUT ATTACK BY NK. PAPERS ALSO MENTIONED MOVEMENT OF AIRCRAFT CARRIED RANGER OF SEVENTH FLEET TO AN UNSPECIFIED LOCATION. INSIDE PAGES TYPICALLY CARRIED SEVERAL PHOTOS, EACH TWO-COLUMNS IN WIDTH, SHOWING SEQUENCE OF EVENTS AT DMZ WHEN NK SOLDIERS ATTACKED. OTHER STORIES MENTIONED THAT NATIONAL ASSEMBLY WILL HOLD JOINT MEETING OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND NATIONAL DEFENSE COMMITTEES ON AUGUST 21. COMMITTEES WILL BE BRIEFED ON MILITARY SITUATION BY NO CHAE-HYON, CHAIRMAN OF JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF. NEWSPAPERS ALSO QUOTED FOREIGN PRESS REACTION, NOTABLY YANAGIYA'S STATEMENT IN TOKYO FOR GOJ, FONOFF SPOKESMAN'S STATEMENT IN LONDON, AND LE MONDE NEWSPAPER IN PARIS. ALL PM PAPERS FEATURED ON BOTTOM OF FRONT PAGE A STATEMENT BY ROK VETERANS ASSOCIATION SAYING "LET'S CONDEMN NORTHERN PUPPETS' OUTRAGE, TREACHEROUS INTENTIONS."

5. MORNING EDITORIAL COMMENTS: SHOCK AND ANGER WERE GENERAL REACTIONS OF THE ROK PRESS ON NK DMZ KILLING OF US OFFICERS. MASS-CIRCULATION HANDBOOK ILBO SAID, "IT IS APPARENTLY AIMED TO COLLAPSE ARMISTICE AGREEMENT, TO INSTIGATE US PUBLIC OPINION TO OPPOSE FOREIGN AID AND US COMMITMENT FOR ROK, AND TO BRING ABOUT USFK PULLOUT FROM ROK...WE CAN HARDLY RULE OUT POSSIBILITY THAT MILITANT NK MAY LAUNCH SURPRISE ATTACK AGAINST ROK DURING NOVEMBER US PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION AND UNGA DEBATE... IN THIS RESPECT, WE MUST BE ALERT FOR NK MACHINATIONS TO START ANOTHER WAR IN KOREA...*" CONSERVATIVE CHOSUN ILBO COMMENTED, "WORLD NATIONS ARE DEPLORING NK BRUTALITY...NK DMZ MURDER OF US OFFICERS HAS BUILT WAR ATMOSPHERE IN KOREA...NK LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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APPARENTLY COMMITTED SUCH BRUTAL ACT IN ORDER TO LEAD ITS PEOPLE TO PAY MORE CONCERN TO OUTSIDE MATTERS THAN INTERNAL AFFAIRS IN THE WAKE OF SERIOUS POWER STRUGGLE AND ECONOMIC CATASTROPHE PREVAILING IN NK. TO ISOLATE ROK BY REALIZING DIRECT US-NK CONTACTS, AND TO ACCELERATE USFK PULLUT FROM KOREA THROUGH FALSE PROPAGANDA THAT THE TENSION IS INCREASING IN KOREA DUE TO US PRESENCE.... IT IS FEARED THAT NK PROVOCATIONS MAY CAUSE ALL OUT WAR IN KOREA...HOWEVER, NK SHOULD NKOW THAT US IS FIRMLY DETERMINED TO HELP KOREA, AND ROK HAS DEFENSE CAPABILITIES SUFFICIENT TO LEAD NK TO SELF-DESTRUCTION SHOULD THEY START ANOTHER WAR IN KOREA...."

6. IN AFTERNOON, TONG-A ILBO EDITORIAL PROPOSED THE PREPARATION OF PREVENTIVE AS WELL AS PUNITIVE MEASURES

BY WHICH NORTH KOREAN ATROCITIES COULD BE PREVENTED,
AND SUGGESTS THAT TRUTH OF PANMUNJOM MURDER CASE BE MADE
KNOWN TO NON-ALIGNED NATIONS CONFERENCE AND UN SECURITY
COUNCIL.

7. IN ADDITION, RADIO AND TV COVERAGE HAS BEEN
SIMILARLY HEAVY. TV STATIONS HAD SPECIALS ON INCIDENT
THURSDAY EVENING FOR ABOUT HALF HOUR. ABOUT 80 PERCENT
OF MORNING RADIO NEWS TIME WAS DEVOTED TO DMZ INCIDENT
AND ITS AFTERMATH, MENTIONING THEMSELVES TREATED IN MORE
DETAIL LATER BY NEWSPAPERS.
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